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NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 11, 2003

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STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK COMMEMORATING THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF SEPTEMBER 11TH

"Today, our nation joins together to commemorate the tragedy of September 11th, 2001. In so doing, we honor those who perished, their loved ones and those brave men and women who courageously gave their lives to save the lives of others. In mourning their loss, we must pledge ourselves as Americans to carry on in their same spirit of selflessness, sacrifice and compassion that made 9-11 one of the most remarkable moments in our nation's history.

"We must never lose sight of the individual costs of that day to countless families, especially the children and spouses of those who died. Yet, the important lessons that 9-11 demonstrated to the nation deserve our reflection, especially as America now exercises our power in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere around the globe.

"There is another September 11th in American history, but it is not well known. On that same date in 1973 -- exactly 30 years ago -- the United States orchestrated a military coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Chile, assassinating its president and installing the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet.

"Prior to that act, Chile's President Salvador Allende was beginning to implement social programs that would help rescue much of the country's population from devastating poverty. These programs, such as increasing workers' wages, proved to be unpopular with powerful US interests that had strong economic holdings in the country.

"Accordingly, another American President, Richard Nixon, provided financing, arms, training and military advice which led to the military coup, a dead president, the end of a democracy, more than two decades of a brutal dictatorship and the deaths of some 3,000 Chilean citizens.

"Nobody likes to think about these things today, but when we are confronted with the products of anger and hostility in the world, we should also examine our own culpability in advancing our share of injustice. As Americans, we must not turn a blind eye to US actions in Iraq or elsewhere that resemble the destructive patterns of our past.

"The selflessness, sacrifice, and compassion for humanity demonstrated by countless individuals on 9-11 should not be left to the memory of that day. They should be pursued in the lives of every American and equally in the actions of our nation. These are lessons for all of us to reflect upon today in honoring the victims and heroes of September 11th, 2001."